

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 8, 2004. Claims 1-3, 5-9, 13-15, 17-19, 21, 23, 24, 28-31, 45, 46, and 48-50 are pending in this application. Claims 34, 35, and 39-42 have been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 1, 13, 23, 28, 45, and 48 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

First, Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of Claims 1-3, 5-9, 13-15, 17-19, 21, 23, 24, 28-31, 45, 46, and 48-50.

The Office Action rejected Claims 34, 35, and 39-42 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,270,187 (Murcia et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,581,284 (Hermanson).

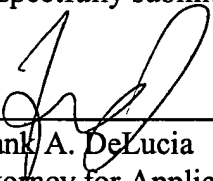
Cancellation of Claims 34, 35, and 39-42 renders their rejections moot.

This Amendment After Final Action is believed to place this application in condition for allowance and, therefore, its entry is believed proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment After Final Action, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact Applicants' undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and the allowance of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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